369/18

THE

WHAT D'YE CALL IT:

A

A Tragi-Comi-Paſtoral

F A R C E.

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Tragi-Comi-Paſtoral

F A R C E.

BY

MR. JOHN GAY.

—Spirat Tragicum ſatis, et feliciter audet.
—Locus eſt et pluribus umbris. HOR.

GLASGOW.

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THE PREFACE.

As I am the firſt who have introduced this kind of dramatick entertaiment upon the ſtage, I think it abſolutely neceſſary to ſay ſomething by way of preface, not only to ſhew the nature of it, but to anſwer ſome objections that have been already rais'd againſt it by the graver ſort of wits, and other intereſted people.

We have often had tragi-comedies upon the Engliſh theatre with ſucceſs: but in that ſort of compoſition the tragedy and comedy are in diſtinct ſcenes, and may be eaſily ſeparated from each other. But the whole art of the Tragi-Comi-Paſtoral Farce lies in interweaving the ſeveral kinds of the drama with each other, ſo that they cannot be diſtinguiſh'd or ſeparated.

The objections that are rais'd againſt it as a Tragedy, are as follow.

Firſt, As to the plot, they deny it to be tragical, becauſe its cataſtrophe is a wedding, which hath ever been accounted comical.

Secondly, As to the characters; that thoſe of a Juſtice of Peace, a Pariſh Clark, and an Embryo's Ghoſt, are very improper to the dignity of tragedy, and were never introduc'd by the antients.

Thirdly, They ſay the ſentiments are not tragical, becauſe they are thoſe of the loweſt country people.

Laſtly, They will not allow the moral to be proper for tragedy, becauſe the end of tragedy being to ſhow hu-

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man life in its diſtreſſes, imperfections and infirmities, thereby to ſoften the mind of man from its natural obduracy and haughtineſs, the moral ought to have the ſame tendency; but this moral, they ſay, ſeems entirely calculated to flatter the audience in their vanity and ſelf-conceitedneſs.

You all have ſenſe enough to find it out.

To the firſt objection I anſwer, that it is ſtill a diſputable point, even among the beſt criticks, whether a tragedy may not have a happy Cataſtrophe; that the French authors are of this opinion, appears from moſt of their modern tragedies.

In anſwer to the ſecond objection, I cannot affirm, that any of the antients have either a Juſtice of Peace, a Pariſh-Clark, or an Embryo Ghoſt in their tragedies; yet whoever will look into Sophocles, Euripides, or Seneca, will find that they greatly affected to introduce Nurſes in all their pieces, which every one muſt grant to be an inferior character to a juſtice of peace; in imitation of which alſo, I have introduced a grandmother and an aunt.

To the third objection, which is the meanneſs of the ſentiments, I anſwer that the ſentiments of princes and clowns have not in reality that difference which they ſeem to have: their thoughts are almoſt the ſame, and they only differ as the ſame thought is attended with a meanneſs or pomp of diction, or receive a different light from the circumſtances each character is converſant with. But theſe criticks have forgot the precept of their maſter Horace, who tells them,

———Tragicus plerumque dolet ſermone pedeſtri.

In anſwer to the objection againſt the moral, I have only this to alledge, That the moral of this piece is conceal'd; and morals that are couch'd ſo as to exerciſe the judgments of the audience, have not been diſapprov'd by the beſt criticks*. And I would have thoſe that object

* *See Boſſu's chapter of concealed ſentences.*

againſt

againſt it as a piece of flattery, conſider, that there is ſuch a figure as the Irony.

The objections againſt it as a Comedy are,

Firſt, They object to the plot, that it throws the characters into the deepeſt circumſtances of diſtreſs: inferiors trampled upon by the tyranny of power, a ſoldier to be ſhot for deſertion, and an innocent maid in the utmoſt deſpair.

Secondly, That ghoſts are introduced, which move terror, a paſſion not proper to be moved in comedy.

Thirdly, They will not allow the ſentiments to be comical, becauſe they are ſuch as naturally flow from the deep diſtreſſes abovementioned. The ſpeech of a dying man, and his laſt advice to his child, are what one could not reaſonably expect ſhould raiſe the mirth of an audience.

Firſt, That the plot is comical, I argue from the Peripaetia and the Cataſtrophe. Peaſcod's change of fortune upon the reprieves being produced, Kitty's diſtreſs ending in the diſcharge of her ſweetheart, and the wedding, are all incidents that are truly comical.

To the ſecond objection I anſwer, That ghoſts have not been omitted in the antient comedy; Ariſtophanes having laid the ſcene of his Βάτραχοι among the ſhades; and Plautus has introduc'd a Lar familiaris in his prologue to the Aulularia, which tho' not actually a ghoſt; is very little better.

As to the third objection, That the Sentiments are not comical, I anſwer, That the ghoſts are the only characters which are objected to as improper for comedy, which I have already proved to be juſtly introduced, as following the manner of the old comedy; but as they allow that the ſentiments naturally flow from the characters, thoſe of the Juſtice, Clowns, &c. which are indiſputably comical characters, muſt be comical. For the ſentiments

being

being convey'd in number and rhime, I have the authority of the beſt modern French comedies.

The only objection againſt it as a Paſtoral, falls upon the characters, which they ſay are partly Paſtoral, and partly not ſo. They inſiſt particularly, that a ſergeant of granadiers is not a paſtoral character, and that the others are ſo far from being in the ſtate of innocence, that the clowns are whoremaſters, and the damſels with child.

To this I reply, that Virgil talks of ſoldiers among his ſhepherds.

Impius haec tam culta Novalia miles habebit.

And the character of the ſergeant is drawn according to the epithet of Virgil, Impius Miles, which may be ſeen in that ſpeech of his.

You dog, die like a ſoldier——and be damn'd.

For, in ſhort, a Soldier to a ſwain is but juſt the ſame thing that a Wolf is to his flocks, and is as naturally talk'd of or introduc'd. As for the reſt of the characters, I can only ſay I have copied nature, making the youths amorous before wedlock, and the damſels complying and fruitful. Thoſe that are the moſt converſant in the country are the beſt judges of this ſort of nature.

Laſtly, They object againſt it as a Farce,

Firſt, Becauſe the irregularity of the plot ſhould anſwer to the extravagance of the characters, which they ſay this piece wants, and therefore is no Farce.

Secondly, They deny the characters to be farcical, becauſe they are actually in nature.

Thirdly, If it was a true Farce, the ſentiments ought to be ſtrain'd, to bear a proportional irregularity with the plot and characters.

To the firſt I anſwer, that the farcical ſcene of the ghoſts which is introduced without any coherence with the reſt of the piece, might be entirely left out, and would not be allowed in a regular comedy. There are indeed a great number

number of dramatic entertainments, where are ſcenes of this kind; but thoſe pieces in reality are not Comedies, but five Act Farces.

Secondly, Let the criticks conſider only the nature of farce that it is made up of abſurdities and incongruities, and that thoſe pieces which have theſe qualities in the greateſt degree are the moſt farces; and they will allow this to be ſo from the characters, and particularly from that of the ſpeaking Ghoſt of an Embryo, in the concluſion of the firſt act. I have 'tis true, Ariſtophanes' authority for things of this ſort in comedy, who hath introduced a Chorus of Frogs, and made them talk in the following manner:

Βρεκεκεκὶξ, κοὰξ, κοὰξ,
Βρεκεκεκὶξ, κοὰξ κοὰξ,
Λιμναῖα χρηνῶν τέκνα, &c.

Mr. D'Urfey of our own nation has given all the fowls of the air the faculty of ſpeech equal with the parrot. Swans and elbow-chairs in the opera of Diocleſian have danc'd upon the Engliſh ſtage with good ſucceſs. Shakeſpear hath ſome characters of this ſort, as a 'ſpeaking 'wall, and Moonſhine*.' The former he deſigned to introduce (as he tells us himſelf) with 'ſomething rough 'caſt about him,' and the latter comes in with a lanthorn and candle; which in my opinion are characters that make a good figure in the modern farce.

Thirdly, The ſentiments are truly of the farce kind, as they are the ſentiments of the meaneſt clowns convey'd in the pomp of numbers and rhyme; which is certainly forc'd and out of nature, and therefore farcical.

After all I have ſaid, I would have theſe criticks only conſider, when they object againſt it as a tragedy, that I deſign'd it ſomething of a comedy; when they cavil at it as a comedy, that I had partly a view to paſtoral; when they

* *See his midſummer night's dream.*

they attack it as a paſtoral, that my endeavours were in ſome degree to write a farce; and when they would deſtroy its character as a farce, that my deſign was a tragi-comi-paſtoral: I believe when they conſider this, they will all agree, that I have happily enough executed what I purpos'd, which is all I contend for. Yet that I might avoid the cavils and miſinterpretations of ſevere critics, I have not call'd it a tragedy, comedy, paſtoral, or farce, but left the name entirely undetermin'd in the doubtful appellation of 'the What d'ye call it,' which name I thought unexceptionable; but I added to it a Tragi-Comi-Paſtoral Farce, as it comprized all thoſe ſeveral kinds of the Drama.

The judicious reader will eaſily perceive, that the unities are kept as in the moſt perfect pieces, that the ſcenes are unbroken, and poetical juſtice ſtrictly obſerv'd; the ghoſt of the Embryo and the Pariſh-Girle are entire new characters. I might enlarge further upon the conduct of the particular ſcenes, and of the piece in general, but ſhall only ſay, that the ſucceſs this piece has met with upon the ſtage, gives encouragement to our dramatic writers to follow its model; and evidently demonſtrates that this ſort of Drama is no leſs fit for the theatre than thoſe they have ſucceeded in.

Dramatis Perſonae.

MEN.

Sir Roger	Mr. MILLER,
Sir Humphry	Mr. CROSS.
Juſtice Statute	Mr. SHEPHERD.
Squire Thomas, Sir Roger's ſon, alias, Thomas Filbert.	Mr. JOHNSON.
Jonas Dock, alias Timothy Peaſcod	Mr. PENKETHMAN.
Peter Nettle, the ſergeant	Mr. NORRIS.
Steward to Sir Roger	Mr. QUIN.
Conſtable	Mr. PENROY.
Corporal	Mr. WELLER.
Stave, a pariſh-clark.	
The ghoſt of a child unborn	Mr. NORRIS junior.
Countrymen, ghoſts, and ſoldiers.	

WOMEN.

Kitty, the ſteward's daughter, alias Kitty Carrot	Mrs. BICKNELL.
Dorcas, Peaſcod's ſiſter	Mrs. WILLIS ſenior.
Joyce, Peaſcod's daughter left upon the Pariſh	Miſs. YOUNGER.
Aunt	Mrs. BAKER.
Grandmother.	

THE

WHAT D'YE CALL IT:

A

Tragi-Comi-Paſtoral

F A R C E.

SCENE, A Country Juſtice's Hall, adorn'd with Scutcheons and Stag's Horns.

Enter Steward, Squire, Kitty, Dock, and others in Country Habits.

STEWARD.

SO, you are ready in your parts, and in your dreſs too, I ſee; your own beſt cloaths do the buſineſs. Sure never was play and actors ſo ſuited. Come, range your ſelves before me, women on the right, and men on the left. Squire Thomas, you make a good figure.

[The actors range themſelves.

SQUIRE.

Ay, thanks to Barnaby's Sunday cloaths; but call me Thomas Filbert, as I am in the play.

STEWARD.

Chear up, daughter, and make Kitty Carrot the ſhining part: Squire Thomas is to be in love with you to night, girle.

KITTY.

Ay, I have felt Squire Thomas's love to my coſt. I have little ſtomach to play, in the condition he hath put me into. [Aſide.

STEWARD.

Jonas Dock, doſt thou remember thy name?

DOCK.

My name? Jo—Jo—Jonas. No—that was the name my godfathers gave me. My play name is Timothy Pea—Pea—Peaſcod; ay, Peaſcod—and am to be ſhot for a deſerter.—

STEWARD.

And you, Dolly?

DOLLY.

An't pleaſe ye, I am Dorcas, Peaſcod's ſiſter, and am to be with child, as it were.

1 COUNTRYMAN.

And I am to take her up, as it were——I am the Conſtable.

2 COUNTRYMAN.

And I am to ſee Tim ſhot, as it were——I am the Corporal.

STEWARD.

But what is become of our ſergeant?

DORCAS.

Why Peter Nettle, Peter, Peter.

NETTLE. [Enter Nettle.

Theſe ſtockings of Suſan's coſt a woundy deal of pains the pulling on: but what's a ſergeant without red ſtockings?

DOCK

DOCK.

I'll dreſs thee, Peter, I'll dreſs thee. Here, ſtand ſtill, I muſt twiſt thy neckcloth; I would make thee hold up thy head, and have a ruddy complexion; but prithee don't look black in the face, man. [Rolling his neckcloth.] Thou muſt look fierce and dreadful. [Making whiſkers with a burnt cork.] But what ſhall we do for a granadier's cap?

STEWARD.

Fetch the leathern bucket that hangs in the belfry; that is curiouſly painted before, and will make a figure.

NETTLE.

No, no, I have what's worth twenty on't: the Pope's mitre, that my maſter Sir Roger ſeiz'd, when they would have burnt him at our market town.

STEWARD.

So, now let ev'ry body withdraw, and prepare to begin the play. [Exeunt Actors.

My daughter debauched! and by that booby Squire! well, perhaps the conduct of this play may retrieve her folly, and preſerve her reputation. Poor girle! I cannot forget thy tears.

Enter Sir Roger.

Sir ROGER.

Look ye, Steward, don't tell me you can't bring them in. I will have a ghoſt; nay, I will have a competence of ghoſts. What ſhall our neighbours think we are not able to make a ghoſt? A play without a ghoſt is like, is like,—i'gad it is like nothing.

STEWARD.

Sir, be ſatisfied; you ſhall have ghoſts.

Sir ROGER.

And is the play as I ordered it, both a Tragedy and a Comedy? I would have it a Paſtoral too: and if you could make

make it a Farce, ſo much the better———and what if you crown'd all with a ſpice of your Opera? You know my neighbours never ſaw a Play before; and d'ye ſee, I would ſhew them all ſorts of Plays under one.

STEWARD.

Sir Roger, it is contrived for that very purpoſe.

[Enter two Juſtices.

Sir ROGER.

Neighbours, you are welcome. Is not this ſteward of mine a pure ingenious fellow now, to make ſuch a play for us theſe Chriſtmas holy-days. [Exit ſteward bowing.]—A rare headpiece! he has it here, i'faith, [Pointing to his own head.] But indeed, I gave him the hint———To ſee now what contrivance ſome folks have! We have ſo fitted the parts to my tenants, that ev'ry man talks in his own way!———and then we have made juſt three Juſtices in the play, to be play'd by us three Juſtices of the Quorum.

1 JUSTICE.

Zooks!—ſo it is;—main ingenious.———and can we ſit and ſmoak at the ſame time we act?

Sir ROGER.

Ay, ay,—we have but three or four words to ſay,—and may drink and be good company in peace and ſilence all the while after.

2 JUSTICE.

But how ſhall we know when we are to ſay theſe ſame words?

Sir ROGER.

This ſhall be the ſignal———when I ſet down the tankard, then ſpeak you, Sir Humphry,———and when Sir Humphry ſets down the tankard, ſpeak you, Squire Statute.

1 JUSTICE.

Ah, Sir Roger, you are old dog at theſe things.

2 JUSTICE

2 JUSTICE.

To be ſure.

Sir ROGER.

Why, neighbours, you know, experience, experience ——I remember your Harts and your Bettertons——But to ſee your Othello, neighbours,——how he would rave and roar, about a fooliſh flower'd handkerchief!——and then he would groul ſo manfully,——and he would put out the light, and put the light out ſo cleverly! but huſh ——the Prologue, the Prologue.

[They ſeat themſelves with much ceremony at the table, on which are pipes and tobacco, and a large ſilver tankard.

THE

THE PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY

Mr. PENKETHMAN.

THE entertainment of this night——or day,
This ſomething, or this nothing of a Play,
Which ſtrives to pleaſe all palates at a time,
With ghoſts and men, ſongs, dances, proſe and rhime.
This comic ſtory, or this tragic jeſt,
May make you laugh, or cry, as you like beſt;
May exerciſe your good, or your ill-nature,
Move with diſtreſs, or tickle you with ſatyr.
All muſt be pleas'd too with their parts, we think:
Our maids have ſweethearts, and their Worſhips drink.
Criticks, we know, by antient rules may maul it;
But ſure Gallants muſt like——the What d'ye call it.

ACT

ACT I. SCENE I.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Juſtice STATUTE, CONSTABLE, FILBERT, SERGEANT, KITTY, DORCAS, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT.

Sir ROGER.

HERE, Thomas Filbert, anſwer to your name,
Dorcas has ſworn to you ſhe owes her ſhame:
Or wed her ſtrait, or elſe you're ſent afar,
To ſerve his gracious Majeſty in war.

FILBERT.

'Tis falſe, 'tis falſe——I ſcorn thy odious touch.
[Puſhing Dorcas from him.

DORCAS.

When their turn's ſerv'd, all men will do as much.

KITTY.

Ah, good your Worſhips, eaſe a wretched maid.
To the right father let the child be laid.
Art thou not perjur'd?——mark his harmleſs look.
How canſt thou, Dorcas, kiſs the Bible book?
Haſt thou no conſcience, doſt not fear Old Nick?
Sure, ſure the ground will ope, and take thee quick.

SERGEANT.

Zooks! never wed, 'tis ſafer much to roam;
For what is war abroad to war at home?
Who wou'd not ſooner bravely riſque his life;
For what's a cannon to a ſcolding wife?

FILBERT.

Well, if I muſt, I muſt——I hate the wench,
I'll bear a muſquet then againſt the French.

From door to door I'd ſooner whin and beg,
Both arms ſhot off, and on a wooden leg,
Than marry ſuch a trapes——No, no, I'll not:
——Thou wilt too late repent, when I am ſhot.
But, Kitty, why doſt cry?———

GRANDMOTHER.

———Stay, Juſtice, ſtay:
Ah, little did I think to ſee this day?
Muſt grandſon Filbert to the wars be preſt?
Alake! I knew him when he ſuck'd the breaſt,
Taught him his catechiſm, the feſcue held,
And join'd his letters, when the bantling ſpell'd.
His loving mother left him to my care.
Fine child, as like his Dad as he could ſtare?
Come Candlemas, nine years ago ſhe dy'd,
And now lies buried by the yew-tree's ſide.

AUNT.

O tyrant Juſtices! have you forgot
How my poor brother was in Flanders ſhot?
You preſs'd my brother——he ſhall walk in white,
He ſhall——and ſhake your curtains ev'ry night.
What tho' a paultry hare he raſhly kill'd,
That croſs'd the furrows while he plough'd the field?
You ſent him o'er the hills and far away:
Left his old mother to the pariſh pay,
With whom he ſhar'd his ten pence ev'ry day.
Wat kill'd a bird, was from his farm turn'd out;
You took the law of Thomas for a trout:
You ruin'd my poor uncle at the ſizes,
And made him pay nine pounds for Niſipriſes.
Now will you preſs my harmleſs nephew too?
Ah, what has conſcience with the rich to do!

[Sir Roger takes up the tankard.

Though in my hand no ſilver tankard ſhine,
Nor my dry lip be dy'd with claret wine,

Yet I can ſleep in peace———

Sir ROGER. [After having drunk.

———— Woman, forbear.

Sir HUMPHRY. [Drinking.

The man's within the act———

Juſtice STATUTE. [Drinking alſo.

————The law is clear.

SERGEANT.

Haſte, let their Worſhips orders be obey'd.

KITTY. [Kneeling.

Behold how low you have reduc'd a maid.
Thus to your Worſhips on my knees I ſue,
(A poſture never known but in the pew)
If we can money for our taxes find,
Take that——but ah! our ſweethearts leave behind.
To trade ſo barb'rous he was never bred,
The blood of vermine all the blood he ſhed:
How ſhould he, harmleſs youth, how ſhould he then
Who kill'd but poulcats, learn to murder men?

DORCAS.

O Thomas, Thomas! hazard not thy life;
By all that's good, I'll make a loving wife:
I'll prove a true pains-taker day and night,
I'll ſpin and card, and keep our children tight.
I can knit ſtockings, you can thatch a barn;
If you earn ten pence, I my groat can earn.
How ſhall I weep to hear this infant cry?

[Her hand on her belly.

He'll have no father—and no husband I.

KITTY.

Hold, Thomas, hold, nor hear that ſhameleſs witch:
I can ſow plain-work, I can darn and ſtitch;
I can bear ſultry days and froſty weather;
Yes, yes, my Thomas, we will go together;

Beyond the ſeas together will we go,
In camps together, as at harveſt, glow.
This arm ſhall be a bolſter for thy head,
I'll fetch clean ſtraw to make my ſoldier's bed;
There, while thou ſleepeſt, my apron o'er thee hold,
Or with it patch thy tent againſt the cold.
Pigs in hard rains I've watch'd, and ſhall I do
That for the pigs, I would not bear for you?

FILBERT.

Oh, Kitty, Kitty, canſt thou quit the rake,
And leave theſe meadows for thy ſweetheart's ſake?
Canſt thou ſo many gallant ſoldiers ſee,
And captains and lieutenants ſlight for me?
Say, canſt thou hear the guns, and never ſhake,
Nor ſtart at oaths that make a Chriſtian quake?
Canſt thou bear hunger, canſt thou march and toil
A long long way, a thouſand thouſand mile?
And when thy Tom's blown up, or ſhot away,
Then canſt thou ſtarve?——they'll cheat thee of my pay.

Sir ROGER. [Drinking.

Take out that wench———

Sir HUMPHRY. [Drinking.

————But give her pennance meet.

Juſtice STATUTE. [Drinking alſo.

I'll ſee her ſtand——next ſunday—in a ſheet.

DORCAS.

Ah! why does nature give us ſo much cauſe
To make kind-hearted laſſes break the laws?
Why ſhould hard laws kind-hearted laſſes bind,
When too ſoft nature draws us after kind?

SCENE

SCENE II.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Juſtice STATUTE, FILBERT, SERGEANT, KITTY, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT, SOLDIER.

SOLDIER.

Sergeant, the captain to your quarters ſent;
To ev'ry ale-houſe in the town I went.
Our corp'ral now has the deſerter found;
The men are all drawn out, the pris'ner bound.

SERGEANT. [To Filbert.

Come, ſoldier, come———

KITTY.

———Ah! take me, take me too.

GRANDMOTHER.

Stay, forward wench;———

AUNT.

———What would the creature do?
This week thy mother means to waſh and brew.

KITTY.

Brew then ſhe may herſelf, or waſh or bake;
I'd leave ten mothers for one ſweetheart's ſake.
O juſtice moſt unjuſt!——

FILBERT.

———O tyranny!

KITTY.

How can I part?———

FILBERT.

———Alas! and how can I?

KITTY.

O rueful day!———

FILBERT.

———Rueful indeed, I trow.

KITTY.

O woeful day!

FILBERT

————A day indeed of woe!

KITTY.

When gentlefolks their ſweethearts leave behind,
They can write letters, and ſay ſomething kind;
But how ſhall Filbert unto me endite,
When neither I can read, nor he can write?
Yet, Juſtices, permit us e'er we part
To break this ninepence, as you've broke our heart.

FILBERT.

[Breaking the ninepence.

As this divides, ſo are we torn in twain.

KITTY.

[Joining the pieces.

And as this meets, thus may we meet again.

[She is drawn away on one ſide of the ſtage, by aunt and grandmother.

Yet one look more———

FILBERT.

[Haul'd off on the other ſide by the ſergeant.

————One more e'er yet we go.

KITTY.

To part is death.———

FILBERT.

————'Tis death to part.

KITTY.

————————Ah!

FILBERT.

————————Oh!

SCENE

SCENE III.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Juſtice STATUTE, and CONSTABLE.

Sir ROGER. [Drinking.

See, conſtable, that ev'ry one withdraw.

Sir HUMPHRY. [Drinking.

We've buſineſs———

Juſtice STATUTE. [Drinking alſo.

———To diſcuſs a point of law.

SCENE IV.

Sir ROGER, Sir HUMPHRY, Juſtice STATUTE.

They ſeem in earneſt diſcourſe.

Sir ROGER.

I ſay the preſs-act plainly makes it out.

Sir HUMPHRY.

Doubtleſs, Sir Roger.———

Juſtice STATUTE.

———Brother, without doubt.

A Ghoſt riſes.

1 GHOST.

I'm Jeffry Cackle,——You my death ſhall rue;
For I was preſs'd by you, by you, by you.

[Pointing to the Juſtices.

Another

Another Ghoſt riſes.

2 GHOST.

I'm Smut the farrier.——You my death ſhall rue;
For I was preſs'd by you, by you, by you.

A Woman's Ghoſt riſes.

3 GHOST.

I'm Beſs that hang'd myſelf for Smut ſo true;
So owe my death to you, to you, to you.

A Ghoſt of an Embryo riſes.

4 GHOST.

I was begot before my mother married,
Who whipt by you, of me poor child miſcarried.

Another woman's Ghoſt riſes.

5 GHOST.

Its mother I, whom you whipt black and blue;
Both owe our deaths to you, to you, to you.

[All Ghoſts ſhake their heads.

Sir ROGER.

Why do you ſhake your mealy heads at me?
You cannot ſay I did it——

BOTH JUSTICES.

——No—nor we.

1 GHOST.

All three——

2 GHOST.

——All three.——

3 GHOST.

——All three.

4 GHOST.

——All three.

5 GHOST.

——All three.

A SONG ſung diſmally by a GHOST.

YE goblins, and fairys,
With friſks and vagarys,
Ye fairys and goblins,
With hoppings and hobblings,
Come all, come all
To Sir Roger's great hall.

All fairys and goblins,
All goblins and fairys,
With hoppings and hobblings,
With friſks and vagarys.

CHORUS.

Sing, goblins and fairys,
Sing, fairys and goblins,
With friſks and vagarys,
And hoppings and hobblings.

[The ghoſts dance round the Juſtices, who go off in a fright, and the ghoſts vaniſh.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Field.

TIMOTHY PEASCOD bound; CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, and COUNTRYMEN.

CORPORAL.

STand off there, countrymen; and you, the guard,
Keep close your pris'ner—see that all's prepar'd.
Prime all your firelocks—fasten well the stake.

PEASCOD.

'Tis too much, too much trouble for my sake.
O fellow-soldiers, countrymen and friends,
Be warn'd by me to shun untimely ends:
For evil courses am I brought to shame,
And from my soul I do repent the same.
Oft my kind Grannam told me——Tim, take warning,
Be good—and say thy pray'rs—and mind thy learning.
But, I, sad wretch, went on from crime to crime;
I play'd at nine-pins first in sermon time:
I rob'd the Parson's orchard next; and then
(For which I pray forgiveness) stole——a hen.
When I was press'd, I told them the first day
I wanted heart to fight, so ran away;
[Attempts to run off, but is prevented.
For which behold I die. 'Tis a plain case,
'Twas all a judgment for my want of grace.
[The soldiers prime with their muskets towards him.
Hold, hold, my friends; nay, hold, hold, hold, I pray;
They may go off—and I have more to say.

1 COUNTRYMAN.

Come, 'tis not time to talk——

2 COUNTRYMAN.

————Repent thine ill,
And pray in this good book.—— [Gives him a book.

PEASCOD.

————————I will, I will.
Lend me thy handkercher—' The Pilgrim's pro—
[Reads and weeps.
(I cannot ſee for tears) ' Pro—Progreſs—Oh!
' The Pilgrim's Progreſs—eighth edi—ti—on
' Lon-don--prin-ted--for--Ni-cho-las Bod-ding-ton:
' With new ad-di-tions never made before.
Oh! 'tis ſo moving, I can read no more.
[Drops the book.

SCENE II.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT, FILBERT.

SERGEANT.

What whining's this?--boys, ſee your guns well ramm'd.
You dog, die like a ſoldier——and be damn'd.

FILBERT.

My friend in ropes!————

PEASCOD.

————I ſhould not thus be bound,
If I had means, and could but raiſe five pound,
The cruel corp'ral whiſper'd in my ear,
Five pounds, if rightly tipt, would ſet me clear,

FILBERT.

Here——Peaſcod, take my pouch——'tis all I own.

(For what is means and life when Kitty's gone!)
'Tis my preſs-money—can this ſilver fail?
'Tis all, except one ſixpence ſpent in ale.
This had a ring for Kitty's finger bought,
Kitty on me had by that token thought.
But for thy life, poor Tim, if this can do't;
Take it, with all my ſoul—thou'rt welcome to't.
[Offers him his purſe.

1 COUNTRYMAN.

And take my fourteen pence——

2 COUNTRYMAN.

——And my cramp-ring.
Would, for thy ſake, it were a better thing.

3 COUNTRYMAN.

And maſter ſergeant, take my box of copper.

4 COUNTRYMAN.

And my wife's thimble,——

5 COUNTRYMAN.

——And this 'bacco-ſtopper.

SERGEANT.

No bribes. Take back your things—I'll have them not.

PEASCOD.

Oh! muſt I die?——

CHORUS of COUNTRYMEN.

——Oh! muſt poor Tim be ſhot!

PEASCOD.

But let me kiſs thee firſt—— [Embracing Filbert.

SCENE

SCENE III.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT, FILBERT, DORCAS.

DORCAS.

——————Ah, brother Tim,
Why theſe cloſe hugs? I owe my ſhame to him.
He ſcorns me now, he leaves me in the lurch;
In a white ſheet poor I muſt ſtand at church.
O marry me - [To Filbert.] Thy ſiſter is with child.
[To Tim.
And he, 'twas he my tender heart beguil'd.

PEASCOD.

Could'ſt thou do this? could'ſt thou———
[In anger to Filbert.

SERGEANT.

——————————Draw out the men:
Quick to the ſtake; you muſt be dead by ten.

DORCAS.

Be dead! muſt Tim be dead!———

PEASCOD.

——————He muſt—he muſt.

DORCAS.

Ah! I ſhall ſink downright; my heart will burſt.
—Hold, Sergeant, hold—yet e'er you ſing the Pſalms,
Ah! let me eaſe my conſcience of its qualms.
O brother, brother! Filbert ſtill is true.
I fouly wrong'd him—do, forgive me, do. [To Filb.
The Squire betray'd me; nay,—and what is worſe,
Brib'd me with two gold guineas in this purſe,
To ſwear the child to Filbert.———

PEASCOD.

PEASCOD.

——————What a Jew
My ſiſter is!——Do, Tom, forgive her, do. [To Filb.

FILBERT. [kiſſes Dorcas.

But ſee thy baſe-born child, thy babe of ſhame,
Who left by thee, upon our pariſh came;
Comes for thy bleſſing——

SCENE IV.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT, FILBERT, DORCAS, JOYCE.

PEASCOD.

——————Oh! my ſins of youth!
Why on the haycock didſt thou tempt me, Ruth?
O ſave me, Sergeant;—how ſhall I comply?
I love my daughter ſo——I cannot die.

JOYCE.

Muſt father die! and I be left forlorn?
A lack a day! that ever Joyce was born!
No grandſire in his arms e're dandled me,
And no fond mother danc'd me on her knee.
They ſaid, if ever father got his pay,
I ſhould have two-pence ev'ry market day.

PEASCOD.

Poor child; hang ſorrow, and caſt care behind thee,
The pariſh by this badge is bound to find thee.
(Pointing to the badge on her arm.

JOYCE.

The pariſh finds indeed——but our church-wardens
Feaſt on the ſilver, and give us the farthings.

Then

Then my ſchool-miſtreſs, like a vixen Turk,
Maintains her lazy husband by our work:
Many long tedious days I've worſted ſpun;
She grudg'd me victuals when my taſk was done.
Heav'n ſend me a good ſervice! for I now
Am big enough to waſh, or milk a cow.

PEASCOD.

O that I had by charity been bred!
I then had been much better——taught than fed.
Inſtead of keeping nets againſt the law,
I might have learnt accounts, and ſung Sol—fa.
Farewel, my child; ſpin on, and mind thy book,
And ſend thee ſtore of grace therein to look.
Take warning by thy ſhameleſs aunt; leſt thou
Should'ſt o'er thy baſtard weep—as I do now.
Mark my laſt words——an honeſt living get;
Beware of Papiſhes, and learn to knit.

[Dorcas leads out Joyce ſobbing and crying.

SCENE V.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT, FILBERT.

FILBERT.

Let's drink before we part——for ſorrow's dry.
To Tim's ſafe paſſage———

[Takes out a brandy bottle, and drinks.

1 COUNTRYMAN.

———I'll drink too.

2 COUNTRYMAN.

———And I.

PEASCOD.

Stay, let me pledge—'tis my laſt earthly liquor. [Drinks.

When

—When I am dead you'll bind my grave with wicker.

[They lead him to the ſtake.

1 COUNTRYMAN.

He was a ſpecial ploughman——— [Sighing.

2 COUNTRYMAN.

———Harrow'd well!

3 COUNTRYMAN.

And at our maypole ever bore the bell!

PEASCOD.

Say, is it fitting in this very field,
Where I ſo oft have reap'd, ſo oft have till'd;
This field, where from my youth I have been a carter,
I, in this field ſhould die for a deſerter.

FILBERT.

'Tis hard, 'tis wondrous hard!———

SERGEANT.

———Zooks, here's a pother.
Strip him; I'd ſtay no longer for my brother.

PEASCOD.

[Diſtributing his things among his friends

Take you my 'bacco-box—my neckcloth, you.
To our kind Vicar ſend this bottle-ſkrew.
But wear theſe breeches, Tom; they're quit bran-new.

FILBERT.

Farewell———

1 COUNTRYMAN.

———B'ye, Tim.———

2 COUNTRYMAN.

———Be'ye, Tim.

3 COUNTRYMAN.

———Adieu.

4 COUNTRYMAN.

———Adieu.

[They all take their leave of Peaſcod by ſhaking hands with him.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT, FILBERT, to them a SOLDIER in great haſte.

SOLDIER.

Hold—why ſo furious, Sergeant? by your leave,
Untye the priſ'ner——ſee, here's a reprieve.
[Shows a paper.

CHORUS of COUNTRYMEN. [Huzzaing.

A reprieve, a reprieve, a reprieve!
[Peaſcod is unty'd, and embraces his friends.

SCENE VII.

PEASCOD, CORPORAL, SOLDIERS, COUNTRYMEN, SERGEANT, FILBERT, CONSTABLE.

CONSTABLE.

Friends, reprehend him, reprehend him there.

SERGEANT.

For what?———

CONSTABLE.

———For ſtealing gaſſer Gap's gray mare.
[They ſeize the ſergeant.

PEASCOD.

Why, hearkye, hearkye, friend; you'll go to pot.
Would you be rather hang'd—hah!—hang'd or ſhot?

SERGEANT.

Nay, hold, hold, hold———

PEASCOD.

———Not if you were my brother.
Why, friend, ſhould you not hang as well's another.

CONSTABLE.

Thus ſaid Sir John——the law muſt take its courſe;
'Tis law that he may 'ſcape who ſteals a horſe.
But (ſaid Sir John) the ſtatutes all declare,
The man ſhall ſure be hang'd—that ſteals a mare.

PEASCOD. [to the Sergeant.

Ay—right—he ſhall be hang'd that ſteals a mare.
He ſhall be hang'd—that's certain; and good cauſe.
A rare good ſentence this—how is't?—the laws
No—not the laws—the ſtatutes all declare,
The man that ſteals a mare ſhall ſure—be—hang'd,
No, no--he ſhall be hang'd that ſteals a mare.

[Exit Sergeant guarded, Countrymen, &c. huzzaing after him.

SCENE VIII.

KITTY, with her hair looſe, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT, HAYMAKERS, CHORUS of SIGHS and GROANS

KITTY.

Dear happy fields, farewell; ye flocks, and you
Sweet meadows, glitt'ring with the pearly dew:
And thou, my rake, companion of my cares,
Giv'n by my mother in my younger years:
With thee the toils of full eight ſprings I've known,
'Tis to thy help I owe this hat and gown;

On

On thee I lean'd, forgetful of my work,
While Tom gaz'd on me, propt upon his fork:
Farewell, farewell; for all thy taſk is o'er,
Kitty ſhall want thy ſervice now no more.
[Flings away the rake.
CHORUS of Sighs and Groans.
Ah——O!——Sure never was the like before!

KITTY.

Happy the maid, whoſe ſweetheart never hears
The ſoldier's drum, nor writ of Juſtice fears.
Our bans thrice bid! and for our wedding day
My kerchief bought! then preſs'd, then forc'd away!
CHORUS of Sighs and Groans
Ah! O! poor ſoul! alack! and well a day!

KITTY.

You, Beſs, ſtill reap with Harry by your ſide;
You, Jenny, ſhall next Sunday be a bride:
But I forlorn!——This ballad ſhews my care;
[Gives Suſan a ballad.
Take this ſad ballad, which I bought at fair:
Suſan can ſing——do you the burthen bear.

A BALLAD.

I.

'TWAS when the ſeas were roaring
With hollow blaſts of wind;
A damſel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclin'd.
Wide o'er the rolling billows
She caſt a wiſtful look,
Her head was crown'd with willows
That tremble o'er the brook.

II.

Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days.
Why didſt thou vent'rous lover,
Why didſt thou truſt the ſeas?
Ceaſe, ceaſe, thou cruel ocean,
And let my lover reſt:
Ah! what's thy troubled motion
To that within my breaſt?

III.

The merchant, rob'd of pleaſure,
Sees tempeſts in deſpair;
But what's the loſs of treaſure
To loſing of my dear?
Should you ſome coaſt be laid on,
Where gold and di'monds grow,
You'd find a richer maiden,
But none that loves you ſo.

IV.

How can they ſay that nature
Has nothing made in vain;
Why then beneath the water
Should hideous rocks remain?
No eyes the rocks diſcover,
That lurk beneath the deep,
To wreck the wand'ring lover,
And leave the maid to weep.

IV.

All melancholy lying,
Thus wail'd ſhe for her dear;
Repay'd each blaſt with ſighing,
Each billow with a tear;

When,

When, o'er the white wave ſtooping,
His floating corpſe ſhe ſpy'd;
Then like a lilly drooping,
She bow'd her head, and dy'd.

KITTY.

Why in this world ſhould wretched Kitty ſtay?
What if theſe hands ſhould make my ſelf away?
I could not ſure do otherways than well.
A maid ſo true's too innocent for hell.
But hearkye, Cis—[Whiſpers, and gives her a penknife.

AUNT.

———I'll do't—'tis but to try
If the poor ſoul can have the heart to die.
[Aſide to the Haymakers.
Thus then I ſtrike—but turn thy head aſide.

KITTY.

'Tis ſhameleſs ſure to fall as pigs have dy'd.
No—take this cord— [Gives her a cord.

AUNT.

———With this thou ſhalt be ſped.
[Putting the nooſe round her neck.

KITTY.

But curs are hang'd.———

AUNT.

———Chriſtians ſhould die in bed.

KITTY.

Then lead me thither; there I'll moan and weep,
And cloſe theſe weary eyes in death.

AUNT.

———or ſleep. [Aſide.

KITTY.

When I am cold, and ſtretch'd upon my bier,
My reſtleſs ſprite ſhall walk at midnight here:

Here

Here ſhall I walk——for 'twas beneath yon tree
Filbert firſt ſaid he lov'd——lov'd only me.
[Kitty faints.

GRANDMOTHER.

She ſwoons, poor ſoul—help, Dolly.

AUNT.

——————————She's in fits.
Bring water, water, water—— [Screaming.

GRANDMOTHER.

——— ——————— ——— Fetch her wits.
[They throw water upon her.

KITTY.

Hah! I am turn'd a ſtream—look all below;
It flows, and flows, and will for ever flow.
The meads are all afloat——the haycocks ſwim.
Hah! who comes here!—my Filbert! drown not him.
Bagpipes in butter, flocks in fleecy fountains,
Churns, ſheephooks, ſeas of milk, and hony mountains.

SCENE IX.

KITTY, GRANDMOTHER, AUNT, HAYMAKERS, FILBERT.

KITTY.

It is his ghoſt——or is it he indeed?
Wert thou not ſent to war? hah, doſt thou bleed?
No———'tis my Filbert.

FILBERT. [embracing her.

——————————Yes, 'tis he, 'tis he.
Dorcas confeſs'd; the Juſtice ſet me free.
I'm thine again.———

KITTY.

KITTY.

——————I thine——

FILBERT.

——————Our fears are fled.

Come, let's to church, to church.——

KITTY.

——————To wed.

FILBERT.

——————To bed.

CHORUS of HAYMAKERS.

A wedding, a bedding; a wedding, a bedding.

[Exeunt all the Actors.

Sir ROGER.

Ay, now for the wedding. Where's he that plays the Parſon. Now, neighbours, you ſhall ſee what was never ſhewn upon the London ſtage.——Why, heigh day! what's our Play at a ſtand?

Enter a Countryman.

COUNTRYMAN.

So, pleaſe your Worſhip, I ſhould have play'd the Parſon, but our Curate would not lend his gown, for he ſays 'tis a profanation.

Sir ROGER.

What a ſcrupulous whim is this? an innocent thing! believe me, an innocent thing.

[The Juſtices aſſent by nods and ſigns.

Enter Stave the pariſh-Clark.

STAVE.

Maſter Doctor ſays he hath two and twenty good reaſons againſt it from the Fathers, and he is come himſelf to utter them to your Worſhip.

Sir ROGER.

What, ſhall our Play be ſpoil'd? I'll have none of his reaſons——call in Mr. Inference.

Stave

Stave goes out, and re-enters.

STAVE.

Sir, he ſays he never greatly affected ſtage Plays.

[WITHIN.]

Stave, Stave, Stave.

Sir ROGER.

Tell him that I ſay——

[WITHIN.]

Stave, Stave.

Sir ROGER.

What, ſhall the Curate controul me? have not I the preſentation? tell him that I will not have my Play ſpoil'd; nay, that he ſhall marry the couple himſelf—— I ſay, he ſhall.

Stave goes out, and re-enters.

STAVE.

The ſteward hath perſwaded him to join their hands in the parlour within——but he ſaith he will not, and cannot in conſcience conſent to expoſe his character before neighbouring gentlemen; neither will he enter into your worſhip's hall; for he calleth it a ſtage pro tempore.

Sir HUMPHRY.

Very likely: the good man may have reaſon.

Juſtice STATUTE.

In troth, we muſt in ſome ſort comply with the ſcrupulous tender conſcienc'd Doctor.

Sir ROGER.

Why, what's a Play without a marriage? and what is a marriage, if one ſees nothing of it? Let him have his humour——but ſet the doors wide open, that we may ſee how all goes on. [Exit Stave.

[Sir Roger at the door pointing.

So nat'ral! d'ye ſee now, neighbours? the ring i'faith. To have and to hold! right again—well play'd, doctor; well

well play'd, Son Thomas. Come, come, I'm ſatisfy'd—now for the fiddles and dances.

Enter Steward, Squire Thomas, Kitty, Stave, &c.

STEWARD.

Sir Roger, you are very merry.

So comes a reck'ning when the banquet's o'er,
The dreadful reck'ning, and men ſmile no more.

I wiſh you joy of your play, and of your daughter. I had no way but this to repair the injury your ſon had done my child—ſhe ſhall ſtudy to deſerve your favour.

[Preſenting Kitty to Sir Roger.

Sir ROGER.

Married! how married! can the marriage of Filbert and Carrot have any thing to do with my ſon?

STEWARD.

But the marriage of Thomas and Katherine may, Sir Roger.

Sir ROGER.

What a plague, am I trick'd then? I muſt have a ſtage Play, with a pox!

Sir HUMPHRY.

If this ſpeech be in the play, remember the tankard, Sir Roger.

Squire THOMAS.

Zooks, theſe ſtage plays are plaguy dangerous things—but I am no ſuch fool neither, but I know this was all your contrivance.

Juſtice STATUTE.

Ay, Sir Roger, you told us it was you that gave him the hint.

Sir ROGER.

Why blockhead! puppy! had you no more wit than

to ſay the ceremony? he ſhould only have married you in rhime, fool.

Squire THOMAS.

Why, what did I know, ha? but ſo it is——and ſince murder will out, as the ſaying is; look ye, father, I was under ſome ſort of a promiſe too, d'ye ſee———ſo much for that——If I be a husband, I be a husband, there's an end on't.——ſure I muſt have been married ſome time or other.

[Sir Roger walks up and down fretting, and goes out in a paſſion.

Sir HUMPHRY.

In troth it was in ſome ſort my opinion before; it is good in law.

Juſtice STATUTE.

Good in law, good in law———but hold, we muſt not loſe the Dance.

A DANCE.

EPILOGUE.

STAVE.

Our ſtage Play has a moral—and no doubt
You all have ſenſe enough to find it out.

FINIS.